DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 143 968 CG 011 756

AUTHOR Malcolmson, Ingeborg; Skubinna, Kaye
TITLE A Developmental Group Counseling Program for Elementary Schools.
PUB DATE [73]
NOTE 14p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Change; *Developmental Programs; Elementary Education; *Elementary School Students; Emotional Problems; *Group Counseling; Guides; *Peer Relationship; Program Descriptions; *Self Concept; Social Psychology; Underachievers

ABSTRACT

The Del Mar Union School District in southern California began a developmental program for inarticulate, shy, poorly-peer-oriented students. A group program appeared to be the best way to give this type of child a place to make himself heard, to supply ego-supporting activities, to foster broader peer interaction and the development of relationships among group members, and to help the child develop a greater sense of self. The school district, parent involvement, group activities, and initiation of the program are described. Results of the program are: (1) the observable behavior of many of the participating children has changed, (2) teachers felt that a direct effort was being made to enhance the emotional growth of pupils in ways they, in the classroom, could not supply. (SPT)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED143968

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

A DEVELOPMENTAL GROUP COUNSELING PROGRAM

FOR

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Presented by the

DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

Del Mar, California

Clark Howard, Superintendent

Speakers

Mrs. Ingeborg Malcolmson, Sr. Counselor

Mrs. Kaye Skubinna, Counselor

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mrs. I. Malcolmson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

CG 011756

Counseling is often thought of in a school as a function which deals with children who are having academic and acting-out social problems and most of the children referred to counselors are this style of person. They need academic diagnostic work, a behavior modification plan to improve their social interactions, a reconsideration of their classroom placement, or a plan of home- school child cooperation to assist in their school adjustment. All these needs counselors deal with in their daily case loads in the Del Mar schools. And that makes for a full counseling day.

In addition, as counselors, we felt the need for offering some kind of developmental program for the inarticulate, unheard, shy, poorly peer-oriented youngster who is often lost in the classroom shuffle, because he/she is not a squeaky wheel, not a behavior problem, non-assertive, and probably academically adequate, although, sometimes under-acheivers. And we know that some of these children are depressed, never attain their intellectual potential and are high-risk persons emotionally. A group program appeared to be the best way to give this style of child a place to make herself/himself heard, to supply ego-supporting activities, to foster broader peer interaction and the development of relationships among group members, to help the child develop a greater sense of Self.

Del Mar started this program three years ago, and each year it has developed so that now the district offers clearly defined and structured programs at K-1-2, Grades 3-4, and Grades 5-6. At Grades 5-6, there are "Retread" groups for children who have been in groups before.

Description of the School District:

Del Mar is a generally suburban area directly north of the City of San Diego along the ocean. The Del Mar Union School District is an elementary district and

serves an area which includes the City of Del Mar plus a strip of land running eastward, which is in the City of San Diego. The district, while now having only three elementary schools, has the potential for rapid growth in this eastern area. The community is highly oriented to controlled growth and benign ecological development.

The parents living in the school district are generally college educated and have a high middle-class standard of living. They show concern for all areas of their childrens' school experience and are much involved in the schools. Many are employed as trained aides, others volunteer to work in classrooms, in the learning centers and libraries, and in the Early Childhood Education programs.

The three elementary schools have approximately 1,100 children enrolled in Grades K - 6. Each school offers a differing educational environment. The Heights School offers self-contained, single teacher classrooms for Grades K - 4 and a teamed 4th grade. The Hills school is an open-space, multigraded, team-teaching school housing children at Grades K-3, and the Shores school has fifth and sixth grades in self-contained classrooms, with one 4-5-6 multigraded, open-space classroom with a team of 3 teachers.

The district has Early Childhood Education Programs in the two primary schools, a Mentally Gifted Minors program which comprises 13% of the pupils, and an Educationally Handicapped - LDG Program. There is a full-time teacher of orchestral music. Each school has a learning center with a full-time teacher in charge. The upper-grade school has a separate library in charge of an aide.

The commitment of the district is to quality education, with individualization of instruction; a variety of classroom environments: traditional, team-teaching,

open space and multigrading; and the integration of guidance services at all levels.

Development of the Small Counseling Groups

The small counseling groups developed out of a need to satisfy the self-concept component of the ECE Program, and have since broadened to the other grade levels. Teachers expressed concerns over children who,despite teachers' efforts to individualize instruction and give personal attention to each child, appeared to remain isolated, shy, or unable to relate to peers.

Teachers referred the children they wanted to enroll in the groups. They were provided with the activity framework of each meeting, so they would know what was going on. Teachers then telephoned parents to tell them about the group counseling plan and to get their permission for the child to participate. At the same time teachers gave their reasons why they wanted each child to be a part of this program. Parents and teachers were free to look at all materials. In most cases, the counselor interviewed each teacher to discover the teacher's goal for each pupil referred and to find out some positive things about each child. At the close of each set of meetings, the counselor gave teachers feedback on how the child was in the groups. Teachers were also asked to report any observable differences they had seen in children's behavior.

The IALAC and SOS groups have done two things: First, they have changed the observable behavior of many of the children participating and, second, teachers felt good that a direct effort was being made to enhance the emotional growth of pupils in ways the classroom apparently could not supply.

Choosing Appropriate Structures and Activities:

Because experience has taught that young school children need a talking and action structure in order to be involved, we designed activity-centered topics for each meeting. We chose and adapted from many sources, which are listed in the bibliography. Clarence Mahler's book, "Group Counseling in the Schools," served as a resource in that he defines clearly the differences between the style of group interaction acceptable in the school setting and what might be termed encounter groups, T-groups, etc. We found this important as giving a rationale acceptable to administration, teachers, and parents.

We see the activities as providing the framework from which children and leader may move toward closer interaction in reality-oriented positive ways. The leader should be a trained person, able to sensitively pick up the verbal and non-verbal clues which pupils reveal, and respond to this information in person-to-person communication. The accepting attitude of the leader transmits itself to the children--both directly and indirectly. The leader can openly ask the group to give one of its members respect, understanding, and care. And the group leader acts as a role model to transmit these qualities to the children.

GUIDELINES FOR GETTING STARTED:

1. Get administrative support. Stress the type of child with whom you will be working and the needs of those children. Present format and activities.

2. State purpose for the group which principals, teachers and parents can understand.

3. Present format and planned activites at a staff meeting. Explain target group population to teachers and get referrals.

4. Keep group membership small (5 or 6 children).

5. Have teachers contact parents for permission so that group activities , while counselor facilitatied, are a classroom extension.

6. Have separate groups for boys and girls at 4th or 5th grade.

7. Meet with each child briefly prior to the first group session.

8. Devise the pre-post group questionnaire and have teachers respond and return.

9. Establish group rules at the first session. (You may want to post these) Example: everyone gets a turn, no put downs , any person may pass if they wish, and only one person talks at a time.

10. Although you provide the structure and activities, be flexible if the group changes direction to fulfill a current need.

This is the questionnaire we have used. If using the questionnaire pre and post, different colored paper should be used. Questionnaire also acts as a screening device for group population.

S.O.S. Group Questionnaire

In order to assess behavior change during the S.O.S. Groups, I would like you, very quickly, to check the items on this questionnaire today. At the end of the group, I will ask you to repeat the assessment.

Thank you,

Kaye Skubinna

Child's Name_____ Teacher_____

Date_____

Sample Questionnaire - On a scale from 1 to 5 please indicate with an X where the child's behavior falls. "1" indicates some of the time, "2" indicates most of the time.

	1	2	3	4	5
Eats lunch with friends	.	.	.	.	.
Appears cheerful and happy	.	.	.	.	.
Volunteers information during class	.	.	.	.	.
Talks comfortably in front of class	.	.	.	.	.
Finishes work in allotted time	.	.	.	.	.
Shares ideas and materials	.	.	.	.	.
Participates in Group playground activities	.	.	.	.	.
Cooperates in a Group situation	.	.	.	.	.
Accepts responsibility for self	.	.	.	.	.
Observes classroom rules	.	.	.	.	.
Can work independently	.	.	.	.	.

The following information is given to teachers when new groups are started at the beginning of each school year. They are asked to refer the children they would like in the groups, to get parent permission, and to explain the reason for their referring the children.

WHO TO REFER: IALAC and SOS Groups are designed to be self-concept building, to improve interaction with peers, and to give children a better concept of themselves in relation to others. The groups are not productive for acting-out behavior problem children.

PARENT PERMISSION: Please call parents to tell them about the groups. IALAC means "I am Lovable and Capable" and SOS does not mean "Help ", it means "Study of Others and Self". Please tell them why such a group would be worthwhile for their child.

HERE ARE SOME WORDS: I've noticed that_____ is often very quiet and seems to be shy about raising his/her hand or contributiing during class discussion. The counselor is starting some groups which we call IALAC Groups (or SOS Groups), which are designed to increase self-confidence. I think this group would provide a good experience for_____, and I wonder if you would give your permission for her/him to participate.

FURTHER (If they ask): There are a series of structured activities designed to provide feelings of success and good will, and also to foster the ability to solve problems together. Children talk about what they are good at, who and what they like, identify their strengths.

EVEN FURTHER (If really necessary): The counselor would be happy to talk to you and show you the materials if you wish! I'll ask her to call you the next day she is here, or you can phone her.

SUGGESTED GROUP ACTIVITIES

I. IALAC GROUPS (Grades K-1-2)

Purpose: To build on the strengths of each child; to provide a comfortable climate for learning to speak and share ideas; to make each child aware of his uniqueness and potential.

Format: Six to eight meetings, one-half hour per session.

First Session: Discuss group rules. Tell the IALAC story modified for age of the group and environment of the school. Follow through with guided discussion.

Second Session: Follow-up to IALAC story, emphasize positive experiences, Perhaps make sign of their own.

Third Session: "I CAN" Booklet. This session focuses on the strengths each child has.

Fourth Session: "I WANT CHART" an exercise in the assertion of personality.

Fifth Session: "TELL - IT GAME" May be purchased or you may make your own. See Bibliography - "Teaching Interpersonal Relatio ns Skills".

Sixth Session: CLOSURE ACTIVITIES - evaluation and goodbyes.

II. IALAC GROUPS (Grades 3 - 4)

Purpose: To provide a safe environment for quiet children to express themselves successfully; to focus children's attention on their own capacities. Emphasis on verbal skills.

Format: Six to eight meetings, one-half hour to 45 minutes duration.

First Session: Discuss group rules. Tell the IALAC story modified for age of group and environment of the school. The story is apt to have more effect on children of this age, so discussion following can be at some emotional depth.

Second Session: Follow-up to IALAC Story. Relate individual experiences to the larger setting of the Classroom and school. The leader needs to repeat, emphasize and reinforce the positive elements in the discussion.

Third Session: THE FEELING TREE. Many young children have very little vocabulary to talk about their feelings. The object of the Feeling Tree is to expand participants' ability to identify and talk about their feelings by teaching them the words which are available to them.

Fourth Session: "TELL IT GAME "

Fifth Session: PROBLEM SOLVING. Short story without an ending. Group will think up as many endings as they can think of and the consequences of each.

Sixth Session: CLOSURE. End of Sessions Booklet

III. SOS GROUPS - Study of Others and Self. (Grades 5-6)

Purpose: To learn how individuals differ and to build self- worth (self-esteem) through understanding the behavior of others and self.

Format: Six to eight weekly sessions. 45 minutes each.

First Session: Discuss rules of the group. UN-GAME (See Bibliography)

Second Session: ICE=BREAKER - Non-Verbal Communication (See Bibliography, Number 2.)

Third Session: WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEACHER. This activity is a good one to post in the teachers' room, because children are very fair in what they say about teachers and themselves. You could ask the teachers to respond to this list and give the group some feedback.

Fourth Session: PASS - AROUND PICTURES. A group art project - non-verbal.

Fifth Session: PROBLEM SOLVING - The Mystery Clue

Sixth Session: CLOSURE - "I Learned Statements" - Provides the group and the leader with feedback about the effect of the group sessions on the children. Clarifies and crystallizes what they have learned.

IV. RETREAD GROUPS (Grades 5-6)

Purpose: To provide additional group experiences for children whose needs continue to require reinforcement. And for those children who express a wish to have continuing groups.

Format: Six to eight group sessions. 45 minutes in length.

A good packaged program is TAD (Toward Affective Development) Kit, available from American Guidance Services, Inc., Circle Pines, Minn. 55014

First Session: " MYSELF" CHECK LIST - Children complete unfinished sentences about themselves and then discuss.

Second Session: THE UN-GAME - Have the group make up the question cards.

Third Session: PROBLEM -SOLVING ACTIVITIES.

Fourth Session: HERE AND NOW WHEEL - Reviewing and adding to the vocabulary needed to express feeling states.

Fifth Session: THE MALIGNED WOLF - Another point of view. (See Bibliography, Conflict Management, No. 8)

Sixth Session: CLOSURE - STRENGTHS AND POSITIVE FEEDBACK. At this age the "put-down" syndrome is in full force. This activity provides practice in looking for and stating positive qualities in other group members.

Bibliography

1. 100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom, Jack Canfield and Harold C. Wells, Prentice Hall

2. Values Clarification, Sidney B. Simon, Leland Howe, and Howard Kirschenbaum, available from Pennant Press

3. The IALAC Story, Sidney B. Simon, available from Pennant Press

4. Human Values in Education, W. Ray Rucher, V. Clyde Arnspiger, and Arthur Brodbeck

5. Becoming Aware of Values, Bert K. Simpson, Pennant Press

6. Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training, J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, University Associates Press

7. Teaching Interpersonal Social Skills, ESEA Title III Project, Dept. of Ed., San Diego County

8. Conflict Management, Uvaldo Palomares, Human Development Training Institute

9. The Human Development Program, Uvaldo Palomares, Geraldine Ball, and Harold Bessell, Human Development Training Institute

10. Human Values Reader Series

11. Focus on Self-Development, SRA

12. Developing Understanding of Self and Others, Don Dinkmeyer, American Guidance Service, Inc.

13. Tell It Like It Is - The Ungame, Pennant Press or P.O. Box 962 Garden Grove Ca. 92642

14. I Have Feelings, Terry Berger, Behavioral Publication

15. Don't Worry, Dear, Joan Fassler, Human Science Press

16. The Boy With a Problem, Joan Fassler, Human Science Press

17. TAD Program, American Guidence Services, INC., Circle Pines, Minn. 55014

18. Value Clarification as Learning Process, by Bryon P.Hall, Paulist Press New York N.Y., ParamusN.G. 1973